(d) Pakistan Government continues to follow Restrictive Trade Practices with India. Moreover, contrary to its obligations, including under the WTO, Pakistan has not yet extended MFN treatment to India.

Oil for food scheme

† 2633. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are considering Iraq for "Oil for food" programme sponsored by the U.N.O.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the progress made so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (c) Under the United Nation's Oil for Food Programme, a number of Indian companies had won contracts amounting to $1.1 billion approximately, between 1996-2002. After the war in Iraq, the Oil for Food Programme was extended initially for a period of 45 days under UN Security Council Resolution 1472 and subsequently for a further period of six months under UN Security Council Resolution 1483 for approved and prioritized contracts. The programme expires on November 20,2003. Prioritization by the UN is an ongoing process and, under Resolution 1483,56 contracts won by Indian companies, of a total value of approx. $275 million, have been prioritized as of July 2003 and are under various stages of implementation.

Regarding Indo-South Africa cooperation

2634. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether talks were held recently between India and South Africa for strengthening bilateral economic co-operation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the details of agreement signed between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.